

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 032656
ORIGIN ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DHA-02 SCA-01 SCSE-00 L-03 H-02 SS-15
NSC-05 /039 R

DRAFTED BY ARA/AND/B - MR. PACE:LEE
APPROVED BY ARA - AMBASSADOR TODMAN
-----121646Z 023467 /40

R 121415Z FEB 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

UNCLAS STATE 032656

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CASC, BL

SUBJECT: AMERICAN PRISONERS IN BOLIVIA: PARENTS MEETING
WITH ASSISTANT SECRETARY-DESIGNATE TODMAN

1. A PARENTS DELEGATION COMPOSED OF SIX PARENTS OF US CITIZEN PRISONERS, TWO CONGRESSIONAL STAFF AIDES AND FATHER PHILIP DEVLIN MET WITH ASSISTANT SECRETARY-DESIGNATE TODMAN ON FEBRUARY 10. THE PARENTS EXPRESSED THEIR APPRECIATION FOR PAST EFFORTS AND ASSISTANCE BY EMBASSY LA PAZ, THE MOSKOWITZ TEAM AND ARA OFFICERS. IN ADDITION TO THE REVIEW OF PRISONER CASES CURRENTLY UNDERWAY IN LA PAZ, THE PARENTS HOPE THAT A SEPARATE INITIATIVE OF THEIR OWN THROUGH BOLIVIAN AMBASSADOR CRESPO MAY ALSO PROSPER. THEY SEEK A UNILATERAL GOB DECISION TO PARDON AND DEPORT ALL OF THE PRISONERS AS A GESTURE OF GOODWILL TOWARD THE NEW US ADMINISTRATION. THE PARENTS GROUP STATED THAT THIS INITIATIVE HAS THE SUPPORT OF VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE'S OFFICE, AND NOTED THEIR MEETING OF FEBRUARY 9 WITH A MONDALE STAFF AIDE.

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2. TODMAN RESPONDED BY CITING THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S LENGTHY EFFORTS TO ASSIST THE PRISONERS, NOTING IN PARTICULAR THE RECENT TEAM VISIT TO BOLIVIA. THE BOLIVIAN MINISTER OF INTERIOR WILL REVIEW ALL OF THE CASES, AND WE HAVE HIS

PROMISE, (AS NOTED EARLIER TO THE PARENTS BY THE MOSKOWITZ TEAM) TO COMPLETE THE REVIEW WITHIN ONE MONTH. PROMPT

RESOLUTION OF ALL CASES THROUGH THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM SHOULD FOLLOW UPON THIS ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW. AMBASSADOR TODMAN PROMISED TO INFORM EMBASSY OF HIS MEETING WITH THE PARENTS, AND OF THE IMPORTANCE OF HOLDING MINISTER PEREDA TO HIS WORD. WE AND THE PARENTS SHARE A COMMON OBJECTIVE: THE ULTIMATE RELEASE OF ALL OF THE PRISONERS. WE HAVE NO FEELING THAT THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S APPROACH TO THIS PROBLEM IS THE ONLY POSSIBLE COURSE OF ACTION, OR OUR EXCLUSIVE PRESERVE. INDEED, WE WELCOME THE PARALLEL APPROACH UNDERTAKEN BY THE PARENTS WITH AMBASSADOR CRESPO. THIS APPROACH WILL NOT TAKE PRESSURE OFF OF THE GOB TO PERFORM IN ACCORDANCE WITH MINISTER PEREDA'S PROMISE. WE WOULD RATHER SEE BOTH ATTEMPTS BE MADE THAN TO HAVE THE MATTER FALL BETWEEN TWO STOOLS.

3. DR. WILLIAM FARMER AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE DELEGATION EXPRESSED THEIR CONCERN THAT DEA MIGHT BLOCK OR OTHERWISE INTERFERE WITH THE WELL-INTENTIONED EFFORTS OF STATE AND THE BOLIVIAN EMBASSY IN THIS MATTER. THEY EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT DEA IS "PRETTY MUCH A LAW UNTO ITSELF." AMBASSADOR TODMAN STATED HIS ASTONISHMENT AT THESE OBSERVATIONS, NOTING THAT DEA OFFICERS ABROAD REPORT TO THE AMBASSADOR, WHO IS KEPT INFORMED OF ALL THEIR ACTIONS. HE FURTHER STATED THAT IT WOULD BE UNTHINKABLE THAT DEA COULD HAVE ANY POLITICAL INTEREST IN THE IMPRISONMENT OF US CITIZENS. TODMAN CONCLUDED THE CONVERSATION BY NOTING THAT MSSRS. MOSKOWITZ AND PACE WOULD ACCOMPANY THE PARENTS TO THEIR FEBRAURY 11 MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR CRESPO. THE STATE DEPARTMENT ALSO WILL FOLLOW UP WITH EMBASSY LA PAZ
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ON THE MINISTER OF INTERIOR'S PLEDGE TO US. AMBASSADOR TODMAN STATED HIS HOPE THAT FROM EITHER OR BOTH OF THESE PARALLEL INITIATIVES WOULD FLOW A POSITIVE RESULT FOR THE PARENTS AND THEIR CHILDREN.
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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: MR. PACE:LEE
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